

CCLXX

Divers serious Cautions, plainly shewing the Unlawfulness of the Oath of ABJURATION; and that (for several Reasons) a Branch of the OLD ROYAL FAMILY may more necessarily tend to the Happy Settlement of these Three Distressed Nations, than any other New GOVERNMENT whatsoever.

Persons in Power must remember that they are subject to like passions and imperfections with others, and that they are under very strong temptations to *Pride*, against which, they have need to keep a constant and severe watch; the rather because God hath by our late strange and frequent changes shewn unto Us the instability of all Earthly Power, in case they displease God and discontent the People. This being premised, I take the boldness in all humility to suggest;

1. That the great Interest and Wisdom in *Governours*, lyes not in a violent restraining of Peoples Hands, but in a sweet prevailing upon their Hearts.

2. That a Free State (of all Governments) can worst be settled without the ingaging of the generality of the People, and therefore the Rulers of it ought to make it their great design (as Christ did in his Church) to make them a willing People in the day of their Power.

3. That it is not to be expected that the affections of People should be regained and recovered from those Discontents, Animosities, and Prejudices (wherewith they are filled) in a moment; but it is a work of time, and to be done leisurely, and a work that may be spoiled by Precipitation: As he that shall scrue up a string in an Instrument to the highest at first, shall break it in pieces, while another that brings it up by degrees, may safely raise it to an higher strain. Magistrates being Parents, must bear with their Childrens weakness, and pardon their frowardness, and not immediately reject all that do not at the first word comply with all their desires: Nor must they *Jehu*-like, drive on furiously; but rather with *Jacob*, consider the tenderness of the Children and Flocks, and lead them with gentle and easie marches, least if they be over-driven they dye.

4. That the affections of People are not to be gained by some fair Expressions and Verbal Declarations, (in which the generality of men have learned to put very little confidence) but by visible Demonstrations and effectual actions.

5. That it is impossible to settle the Nation, as a Free State, but upon the Basis of the Sober Party, the others being so inconsiderable in their numbers and interest, so odious to the body of the Nation, so inconsistent with themselves, with their own principles, their own promises, and many times their own former actions, and so much resolved to subject all Civil Affairs and Interests to their own private Conceptions in Religion.

6. That it is in vain and unreasonable to imagine that a State can bottom it self upon both Parties, there being such a manifest impossibility of serving Two Masters; especially such who are, and are like to be at so wide and irreconcilable a distance in their principles, Spirits, Designs, and Endeavours, that the one will be continually provoking, subverting, and counter working the other, and thereby tear out the Bowels of their Common Mother, and weaken the Nation, and make way for any Foreign Adversary: And that they will no more cement, then the *Ark* and *Dagon* could stand together, or than the Iron and Clay in *Daniels* Image could Concorporate: And that State which seeks by such a Syncretism to gain both, will indeed disoblige both Parties, and render their Government ungratefull to all.

7. That together with Scripture and Reason, the experience of these times makes it manifest, that no settlement is like to be had in the State, unless there be some order and establishment in the Church; the distempers in the one, so easily and Universally passing into the other.

8. That our present Rulers cannot more promote their own interest, then by discovering their own intentions in some Signal and Real way in the behalf of the Ministry, Learning, and Universities, and discountenancing that turbulent Generation of *Quakers*, *Fifth-Monarchy-men*, and *Rigid Anabaptists*, that the whole Nation may see that their Rulers do make a difference between such modest, humble, and quiet Souls, as through Tenderness of Conscience and humane frailty, are overtaken with some Errours of lesser importance, and such as overthrow the Faith, and subvert the Foundations of Religion, and make no bones of trampling upon our

Laws, Liberties, Civil Authorities, and Principles of righteousness, when they stand in the way of their particular opinions.

9. That they would be tender in the pressing of Oaths, which have been so frequently urged, and so fearfully violated, that many are afraid even of Lawfull Oaths; and in particular, that the Oath of Abjuration may not be pressed; which,

1. Is unnecessary and insufficient: For, suppose it not to be sufficient, that is already done, to make it Treason for any man to move for the bringing in of the OLD LINE; and suppose that the Magistrate shall think fit to impose an Ingagement upon Members of Parliament: Is not this enough without an Oath of Abjuration! For if men make Conscience, a bare Ingagement will be sufficient; and if they make no Conscience, Ten thousand Abjurations will have no hold of them: And if the one being owned before a mans entrance into the House doth not tye him when he is entered, neither will the other; let men be as cautious as they can, when all is done as it is their Duty as they ought; so it is necessary they must trust the Providence of God with future things.

2. It is (at the least seemingly) unlawfull, as it is an appearance of the highest evil, viz. visible breach of all Covenants, &c. (And We know even Lawfull things are to be avoided when they have but an appearance of evil) as it is a real and great scandal, not onely to such as are engaged to the OLD ROYAL FAMILY, but to Thousands of others (and they Persons sober and judicious) And besides, it is a confining of Gods Providence; For who can say that the affairs of the World, and of the Nation, may not be reduced to such a posture, that it may be not onely lawfull, but also necessary to take in a Branch of that Family upon terms, and that, that may be the onely visible means to prevent the total ruine of these Three Nations? Suppose one of that Line hereafter shall be, and by sufficient and satisfying evidences appear to all People to be a Person truly Gracious, and heartily ready to forgive all His enemies, and to give whatever further security can be desired or had unto the Godly Party of the Nation, as also to those that have purchased His Lands, that they shall enjoy them: Suppose also, that in case of a refusal, all Neighbouring Princes and States resolve to contribute their utmost and united strength towards His restitution (which no wise man will say is impossible) suppose also that our Ships, the Walls of the Nation, are vanquished and broken, which (unless we will with the vain Spaniards fancy them to be an invincible Navy) must needs be allowed for a possibility; and suppose the hearts of the whole Nation, and the best men most freely and fully towards him: And lastly, That the then present (but now future) Magistrates by their ungodly and unrighteous, and selfish carriages, should render themselves odious to the whole Nation. I say in this case, I suppose there would be no Pious and Publick spirited Person but would judge it his Duty to use all Lawfull endeavours, if not for the restoration of the whole Line, yet at least for the restitution of such a Person, for which there could be no way but by the violation of that Oath which he had rashly and sinfully ingaged himself in, thereby defrauding himself of that Liberty which God and Nature had given him, and preventing himself in that Duty, which the saving of his Country from total and certain ruine may indespensably require of him.

It is against Rulers of Prudence, and looks too like a secret Design of some extravagants in Religion, however others may be engaged thereby to provoke and irritate, and disoblige the sober Party in the Nation [the most of whom may be gained by degrees, by the Just and Pious Laudable actions of their Magistrates] and craftily to oblige the State to lean upon that broken reed which hath so oft pierced into their hands; And it seems to be as the opening of the Wound again, when there is some tendencie towards a closure, or like the remanding of Israel into the wilderness, when they were coming towards some Settlement in the Land designed for them: And therefore it is humbly desired, that in so nice a Juncture of Affairs, and so ticklish a time as this is, there may be a forbearing of Corroding Medicaments, and People may be won by Lenitives.

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